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In our last number the outcry of critics, respecting the measure of Ballad Poetry, was dwelt on, perhaps longer than it deserved. We forgot however to take notice of one example of their ignorance, and a convincing proof of their incapacity to speak on the subject. When a line or verse does not tickle their Midas ears, they see it has no harmony-meaning, no doubt; no music. In common conversation, the distinction between harmony and melody need not be exactly preserved; for the idea would be caught by the person addressed. But for those who erect their heads, as the steeples of the literary town; who build their cathedræ and usurp the dictatorship of learning; who adopt the language of kings and Emperors, and pluralize themselves, as one source of the sublime — it is incumbent on them to speak in the terms of art, at least; that although they do not understand themselves, their readers may know how to estimate their dogmas.

A syllable in poetry ~~being~~ corresponding to a note in music, and a foot to a bar, harmony is, by its very derivation, the adaptation of syllables to certain rules and canons; as in the heroic measure, there should be ten syllables, and the cesural pause should fall after the fifth, to make the harmony complete. Harmony farther may depend on simil pauses, or on the corresponding construction of two lines &c.— Melody is the result of the measure, the agreeable effect on the ear.—

This difference certainly holds in the "old baſs," in the English heroic measure. But in versification, where there are only eight syllables in a regular line, and of consequence where there is no neceſsary pause, where there may be twelve syllables and only four accents, without violating its peculiar rules; harmony applies only to the syllables and accents. In heroic poetry, if the rules are observed, and the pauses properly adjusted, melody will result of course. But in Ballad Poetry, in strict propriety of speech, there may be harmony, without melody.

This distinction we take to be sufficiently established, on the authority of Lord Kaimes and Sheridan; and as the only explanation of two words which, though entirely different in their derivation, would be otherwise perfectly synonymous.

But this is not all. Not only do our sagacious critics ~~[illegible]~~ employ the word *harmony*, in place of Melody, but they make use of it to typify and shew forth *legitimate rhyme*. Thus they tell us that "*Goodwin*" and "pudding" *do not harmonize* — i.e. they cannot find them in their Rhyming Dictionary, among the lawful Rhymes. Now that the termination of one word should be an *echo* of that of another; that different consonants before those terminations should make them *chime* or *jingle*, we can conceive; but how *harmony* and rhyme can be convertible terms, we can by no rule of criticism, no figure of grammar of speech, no catachresis and no reasoning, divine.

The use of ancient and in common use obsolete phraseology, is another feature of Ballad Poetry, which finds a plot among the common places for abuse of common Reviewers. The same Remark may be made of this, as of the metre - it is a part of the costume, and cannot be severed from the trunk. A story of Antiquity looks inconsistent in modern language; all association is destroyed, all Interest flaggs, if it preserves not a unique garb. A modern castle, and an imitation the old ballad style, without an imitation of its language, are both of a piece. Poetry cannot paint the days of old, without employing the hue of their shadows.

Still there is a mean, a modus in rebus, a modesty of art as well as of nature. When we read for amusement, we cannot tolerate what requires a perpetual recurrence to a glossary. But with-a few words, whose relation in the sentence makes their meaning strong, or soon grows familiarized, and they always have an additional charm. Useless obscurity is always reprehensible but he who wishes to be read, will always take care not to stand in his own light. If he has not wit enough to do this, he is not worth reading.

Who wishes that Burns had written entirely in English? His pieces in the "Lowland" dialect are always inferior to those, in which he embodied the inspiration of the muse of Scotia in her own native garb! He who has not energy enough to overcome the first difficulties of a varying dialect, will lose noth by his inertia. If he finds it too troublesome to remove the veil, he is unworthy of touching the thi

The language of Poetry in ev nation has always been different fro that of its prose. Whatever be the n ture of inspiration, words form the wings on which a poet must soar; and unless the feathers of a goose are as well calculated for flying as those of an eagle, the many must be allowed to regulate the language of Parnassus — where, among all the inhabitants, we meet not dictionary makers or reviewers —

Poets have always had the licence, under certain restrictions, to add to, alter and clip the current coin of speech. Licuit semperque licebit — dabitur que licentia sumpta prudenter. If Horace allowed, nay, thought it a praiseworthy thing in a poet, to make a happy addition to the language, from the Greek, why may not we graft on our forest which contains so strange a medley brought from every quarter of the earth, new slips from the good old Saxon, and resuscitate its flagging energies by new sap from the pure unadulterated present stew.

"Multa renascentur quae jam cecidere." we sincerely hope they may. Were this all that is urged against some of our present poets, it would not be much; although, we apprehend that they have the right side of the argument. But the further bellowing of our plural mooncalves, by showing the "nature of the beast" proclaim what honor is due to the rest of their caterwaulings.

Milton and Shakespeare, or Shakespeare and Milton, being the two great classics of our language, it is to be supposed that all who make any pretensions to polite letters, are acquainted with their dialect, and that all who write English poetry may be allowed to adopt. It is no plagiarism to borrow their *ideas*, without acknowledging the obligation by quotation marks— and why their words may not be employed is hard to determine. No one denies it; but petty critics in their impenetrable ignorance, on both sides of the Atlantic, have fallen tooth and nail on words which they did not understand, and of course believed no one else did — which are in common use with Milton and Shakspeare.

Now, if every word which an unlettered Reviewer does not understand is to be out-lawed the republic of learning, in the course of a century the authors we have mentioned, will be Greek and Hebrew to three fourths of of those who speak the language — Beaumont & Fletcher and Ben Johnson will be despatched in a much shorter time — and our old English Ballads will become what the hieroglyphics of Egypt now are — It should seem to be a duty which every poet owes to the fame of the great masters of our song, to venti:

invite his aid, however feeble, to preserve their relics from oblivion.

I am satis. We shall conclude our desultory dissertations on the burlesque in criticism, by noticing two or three other minor topics of our Reviewers. In the first place, these gentry understand neither the figures of grammar nor of rhetoric. If they meet with the commonest ellipsis, they sing Eureka, and denounce the particle as a rebel against syntax. If they stumble on a new metaphor, when the ~~allusion~~ similitude is not obvious at first sight, they chuckle over their dullness of perception, and exaggerate the difference between the things contrasted by the author, with that flippancy which passes with the dull for wit.

Alliteration is a mighty auxiliary to their cause. Innumerable pages have been filled with their success in hunting through some hundred pages for words beginning with the same letters, which have the audacity to come together. One thing is perfectly obvious - The individual, who could devote hours ~~to~~ such a pursuit and then seriously give the public the result of his investigation, may be qualified to become a good rat catcher but a wit, a critic never! O never! None but a critic will presume that we could defend alliteration, as a happy piece of ingenuity, and always admissible in poetry. But as Miss Seward has well remarked in her letters, it is an accident to which poets who have musical ears are very frequently liable - it certainly contributes to melody. When affected it cannot please; when unpremeditated, it is ten to one that nobody but a reviewer will detect it: The Latin and Greek poets are full of alliterations - and so are the greatest of the English minstrels. Shakspere must have admired it, for he evidently affects its use

Tautology is another error, wh their mistaken comprehension of which our own Reviewers beget blunder upon blund Had they only fallen into the vulg error of ~~mista~~ confounding a repetiti of a word, with a repetition of an idea, we should not have been surprised. But they so far wander not only from its critical meaning, but from its very derivation, as to mak a redundance of epithet, tautolog.

All minor Reviewers in attempting to model their plaster on the marble of the Scottish Review, when they attempt wit; run into a flip impertinent style, which were child to use before their parents, they woul certainly gets their ears boxed. You has told us—

As in smooth oil the razor best is w
So wit is by politest sharpness set.

But the minor cobblers of criticism when sharpening their spleen on the grindstone of their stupidity, make such a *saw* of it, that they grate the teeth of the brain, and make the blood of the mind run cold —

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